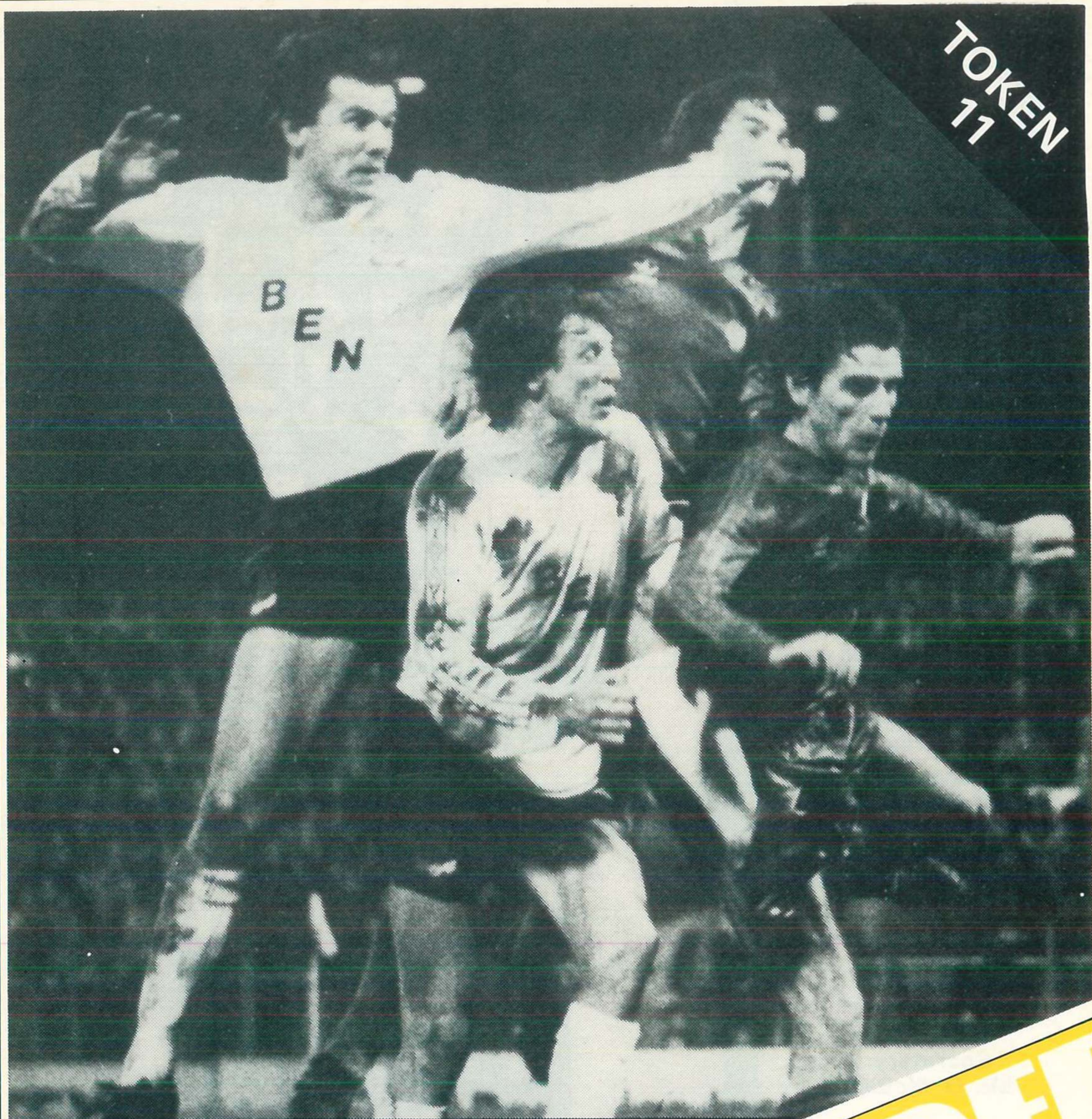


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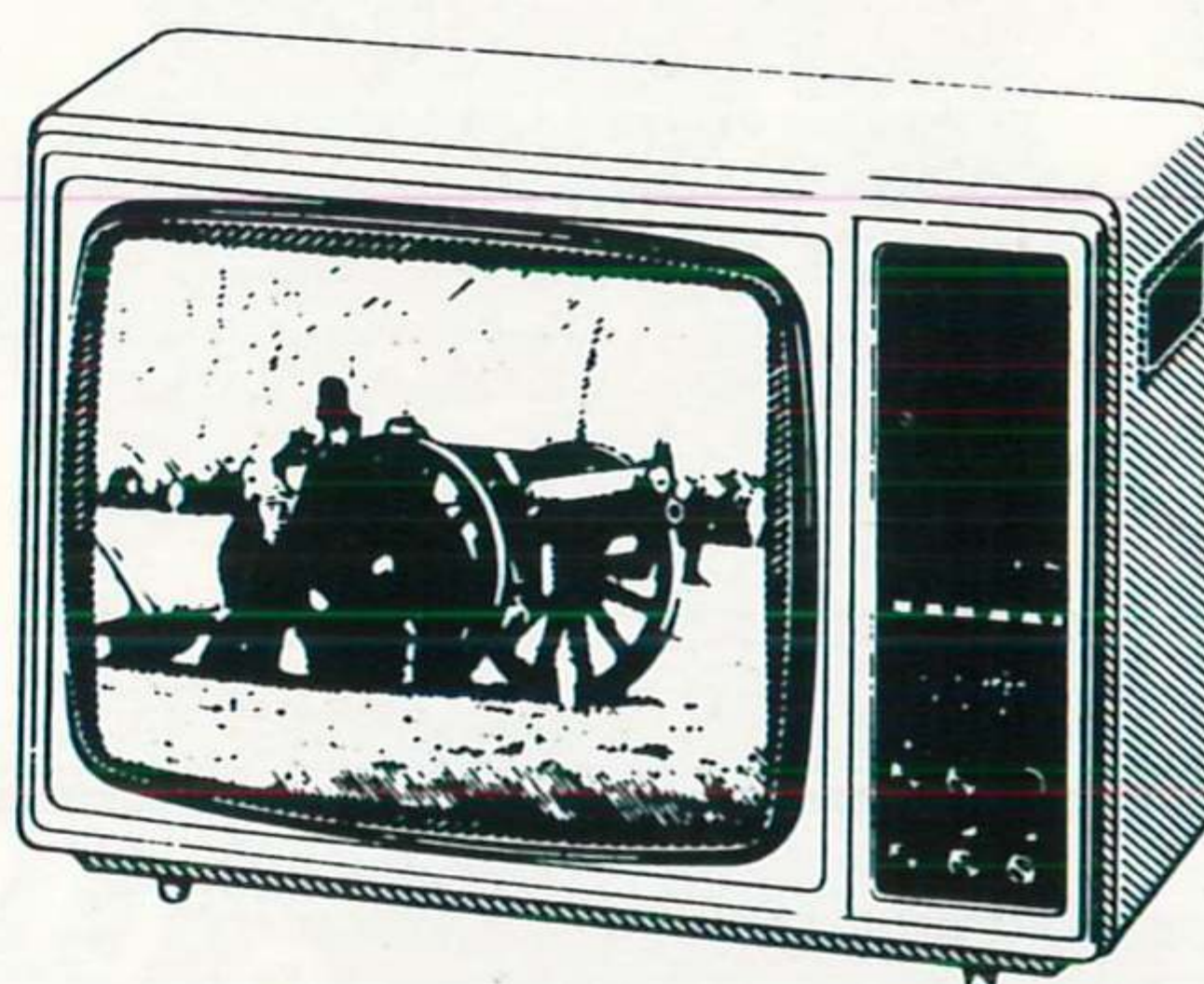
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George Mulhall writes

How thankful I am to be in a position to welcome you all — Wanderers fans and Charlton followers alike — to today's match. For in the grip of the "Big Freeze" you're one of the lucky ones if your game gets the go-ahead.

We missed out last weekend when our game at Sheffield Wednesday was postponed with the Hillsborough pitch frozen solid and under a blanket of snow.

This week, though, despite the Arctic conditions we were able to train with confidence that today's game would be on thanks to our underoil heating system.

Training in this weather, of course, has its problems.

You can't do too much work outside so in our case, having a gymnasium to work in is a bonus. At the end of the day, though, it all boils down to improvisation — coping with difficulties as they arise.

In such cold weather, it was heartwarming to hear Tommy Docherty speaking at the Executive Club Sportsmen's Dinner on Monday evening.

Despite his recent sacking and all the public attention, Tommy was in very good fettle — as entertaining as usual and in very cheerful heart.

Tommy is one of the game's great characters, sadly not directly involved in football at the moment. I say sadly because characters the like of Tommy Docherty are needed to bring variety into the game. He was in good mood, though, and his recent problems took none of the sparkle out of the ever-popular Scotsman.

Today sees the start of what you could call our Christmas programme of games. Charlton today, a visit to Wrexham next Saturday and then a home game against our neighbours Blackburn the following Monday.

I suppose it goes without saying that we must be looking for a good haul of points from the three games.

I hope we get off to a good start, but it won't be easy.

Charlton can be a dangerous side if they manage to produce their home form and with players like Hales and Walsh around, they can provide entertainment and goals.

FRONT COVER: Paul Jones and Alan Gowling challenging against Q.P.R.

CHARLTON



BACK ROW: C. Hall (Physiotherapist), Martin Robinson, Steve Gritt, Colin Powell (now Gillingham), Les Berry, John Phillips, Nicky Johns, Peter Shaw, Billy Lansdowne, Lawrie Madden, Phil Ferns, Ken Craggs (Assistant Manager).
FRONT ROW: Kevin Smith, Paul Walsh, Derek Hales, Leighton Phillips, Alan Mullery (Manager), Terry Naylor, Don McAllister, Phil Walker, Steve Harrison.

LOSING RUN KILLS CHARLTON'S HOPES

by TONY PULLEIN

Charlton's hopes of gaining promotion for the second successive season took a severe knock in October and November when they lost five games in a row. Now, it seems, their ambitions may be limited more on consolidation after winning the third promotion place in the Third Division last season.

Many changes have taken place at The Valley following last season's success. Manager Mike Bailey left to take over at Brighton from Alan Mullery, who had walked out on the club following a disagreement over the constitution of his training staff.

But, within days, Mr Mullery was back in harness at Charlton.

The new manager made several new signings. He signed Welsh international goalkeeper John Phillips on a free transfer from his old club Brighton. This move provided cover for his giant number one 'keeper Nicky Johns.

The new manager signed several new defenders, including former Bolton man Don McAllister. Don, in fact, was switched to a midfield role and, by all accounts, has been revelling in his new role.

Welsh international centre-back Leighton James was bought from Swansea for £25,000 whilst left-back Phil Ferns was purchased from Bournemouth for £30,000. Another full-back, Steve Harrison, arrived at The Valley on a free transfer from Watford.

Yet another newcomer was Billy Lansdowne, a midfield player signed on a free transfer from West Ham.

Charlton lost their opening Second Division game at Luton by 0-3 and, for a little while, the manager made several changes in the side. Young Paul Elliott was introduced at centre-back and Kevin Dickenson was recalled at left-back.

In recent weeks the line-up has been far more settled. Nicky Johns has been in goal behind a back four of Terry Naylor, Leighton Phillips, Paul Elliott and Phil Ferns.

The midfield is still not quite finalised, though. Don McAllister, Steve Gritt, Lawrie Madden, Les Berry and Kevin Smith have all had a recent run.

Derek Hales and Paul Walsh remain the chief strikers with Martin Robinson playing on the left.

When Charlton inflicted Oldham's first defeat of the season — defeating them 3-1 at The Valley in mid-October — they moved up into fifth place in the table and the subject of conversation began to get around to the possibility of a return to Division One after an absence of almost 25 years.

But, when they lost their 100 per cent home League record to Q.P.R. (1-2) it signalled a dramatic decline and complete collapse in defence. They then lost 1-4 at home to Leicester, 1-4 at Newcastle, 1-2 at Rotherham and 3-4 at home to Chelsea.

At that point they had slipped so badly that relegation had become a real threat.

Mr. Mullery hopes, though, that their vastly improved performance that led to a very good 2-1 home win over Barnsley will have restored confidence.

Charlton have yet to win away from home. In League games they drew at Chelsea (2-2), Shrewsbury (1-1), Orient (1-1) and Watford (2-2). They lost at Luton (0-3), Crystal Palace (0-2), Wrexham (0-1), Newcastle (1-4) and Rotherham (1-2).

In the League Cup they drew 2-2 at Reading and then won their home leg 3-1 to qualify for a second round crack at Norwich. But they lost both legs 0-1.

Charlton, who were elected to the Third Division (South) in 1921, rose from the Third to the First Division in successive seasons in the 'thirties. What's more, they achieved runners-up position in Division One in their debut season.

They were beaten by Derby in the 1946 FA Cup final but returned to Wembley a year later to beat Burnley 1-0.

Their run as a First Division side ended with relegation in 1957. For years they settled as a Second Division side but in 1972 disaster befell them and they found themselves back in Division Three. It took them three years to climb their way back into the Second Division and then it was one long scramble to hold their place.

Relegation came again in 1980 but this time they jumped at the first attempt.

Though an eventual return to Division One is always their dream, Charlton this season could be happy enough to settle for a position of safety in the middle of the table.

NICKY JOHNS (Goalkeeper). Nicky returned after his spell in the U.S.A. with Tampa Bay to sign for Charlton for £100,000 in 1979, following a loan spell. Millwall spotted him playing for Minehead and they signed him for £2,000 in 1976 when he was 19. Nicky made 50 League appearances for the Lions before joining Tampa Bay for £150,000.

TERRY NAYLOR (Defender). Terry, who was last season signed from Tottenham on a free transfer in recognition of his fine service to the White Hart Lane club, spent most of his career as a midfield player. After making his League debut in 1970, he made well over 250 senior appearances for Spurs.

LEIGHTON PHILLIPS (Defender). Leighton was signed from Swansea for £25,000 during the summer and he recently won his 58th Welsh cap in the World Cup tie in the USSR. He opened his League career with Cardiff in 1969 but moved onto Aston Villa for £100,000 in 1974. Swansea paid £70,000 for him in 1978.

PAUL ELLIOTT (Defender). Paul is a product of the club's youth team and he got his first chance in their League eleven at Crystal Palace in September. Though he wears the number seven shirt he normally plays centre-back.

PHIL FERNS (Defender). Phil developed with Bournemouth and made his League debut for the Fourth Division club in 1978/79. Charlton signed him for £30,000 this summer.

KEVIN DICKENSON (Defender). Kevin spent his early days with Tottenham but never got a chance in their League eleven. After moving across London to Charlton he made his League debut two seasons ago but had to wait until this season for another chance.

DON McALLISTER (Midfield). Former Bolton full-back Don has taken on a new role in midfield this season. He left Burnden Park to join Spurs for £80,000 in 1975 and moved onto Charlton during the recent close-season.

STEVE GRITT (Midfield). Steve was a striker in his Bournemouth days and he scored three goals in only six League appearances for them during 1976/77. He joined Charlton at the end of that season and was later converted into a defender. Now he is often seen in midfield.

LES BERRY (Midfield). Les developed in the junior sides at The Valley and came through for his League debut in 1975/76. He had been a fixture in the middle of their defence for five years but he has recently been recalled in midfield.

LAWRIE MADDEN (Midfield). Lawrie started his professional career with Arsenal though he didn't get into the Gunners' first-team. After moving across London to The Valley, he made his League bow for Charlton in 1977/78.

KEVIN SMITH (Midfield). Kevin served his apprenticeship at The Valley and made his League debut two seasons ago. Last season he was a regular member of their promotion-winning side but he has not been picked too often this term.

BILLY LANSDOWNE (Midfield). Billy joined Charlton from West Ham this summer. He developed in the Upton Park juniors but got only nine outings in their League eleven.

DEREK HALES (Forward). Derek was top scorer with 23 goals last season. He started as a Luton amateur, later turning professional for the Hatters and making his League debut during 1972/73. Charlton originally signed him for £10,000 in 1973 and he quickly earned his reputation as a sharp-shooter. He scored 21 goals in 1974/75 and 31 the following season. Derby then signed him for £280,000 but he failed to find his form at the Baseball ground. West Ham paid £110,000 for him in 1977 and he returned to Charlton for £60,000 a year later.

MARTIN ROBINSON (Forward). Martin is a former Tottenham apprentice. He got only two opportunities in Tottenham's first-team and was transferred to Charlton for £15,000 in 1978. He has been a consistent scorer since his arrival.

PAUL WALSH (Forward). Paul made his League debut two seasons ago but really hit the headlines last season when he struck 18 goals. Now he's one of Charlton's leading scorers again.

LEROY AMBROSE (Forward). Leroy developed in the junior teams and was first introduced to League soccer two seasons ago. Now he's aiming to try and earn a regular place.

Bolton Wanderers

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Club Scene

THE "DOC" BOUNCES BACK

Tommy Docherty, sacked by our Lancashire neighbours Preston less than a month ago, bounced back in his usual boisterous style here at the Burnden Executive Club on Monday.

The Doc was star guest at the latest in the series of Executive Club Sportsmen's Dinners and showed he had lost none of his edge. Typical of the highly popular Scot, the Doc managed to come up smiling and was the star of another highly successful event.

DERBY AGAIN — AFTER 76 YEARS

Our Third Round FA Cup clash with Derby County on January 2nd will be the first meeting of the two sides in the competition for almost 76 years.

Very few fans from either club will be old enough to remember the semi-final clash between the Wanderers and The Rams at Wolverhampton but for the record Wanderers won by the only goal scored in the second half by R. Taylor in front of a crowd of 25,000 paying £870 at the gate.

Wanderers went on to lose 1-0 in the final to Manchester City.

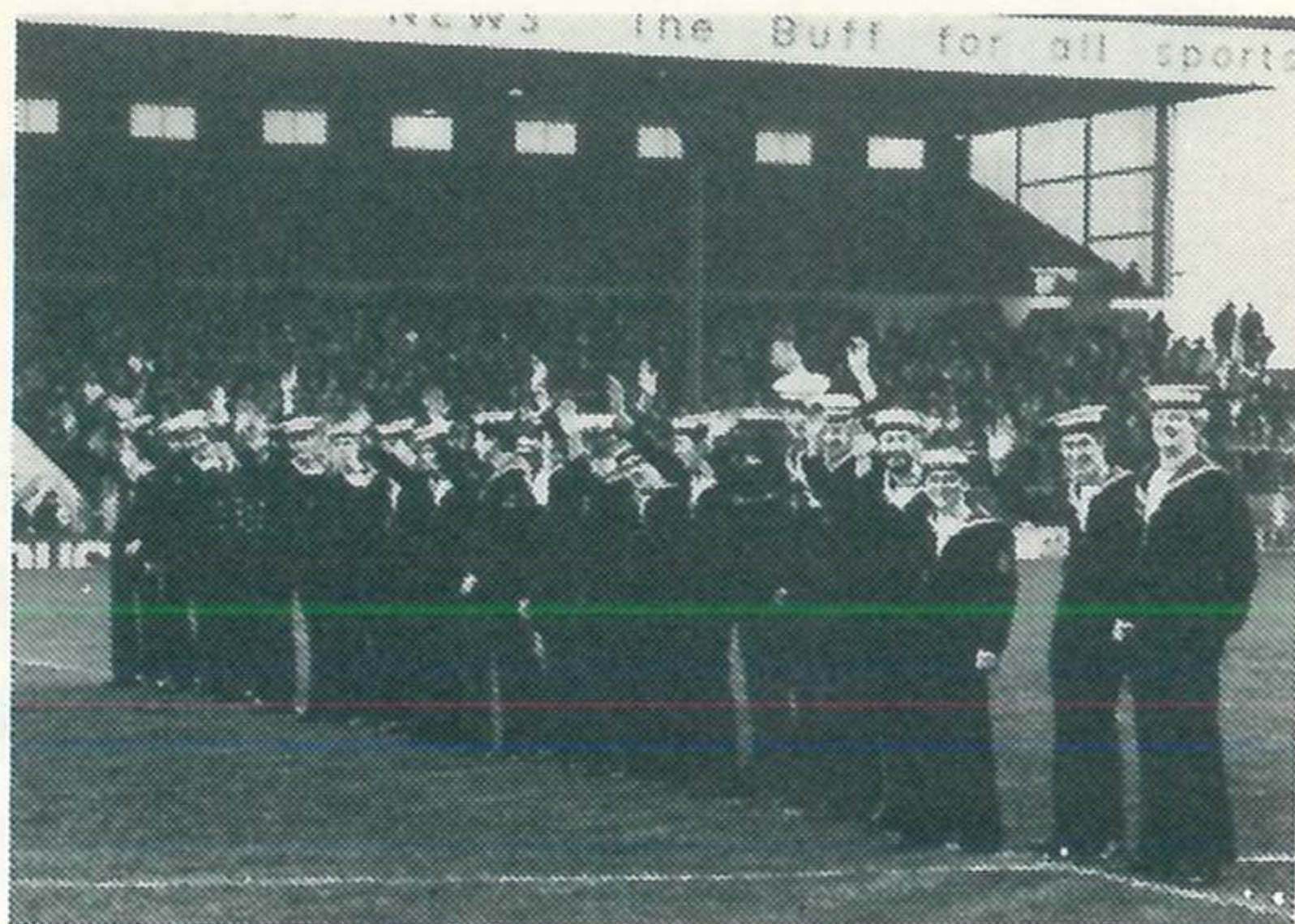
More recently, though, Wanderers met Derby in the Football League Cup.

That was in December 1976 when goals from Neil Whatmore and Willie Morgan earned Wanderers a 2-1 victory at The Baseball Ground and a place in the semi-finals where they lost to Everton over two dramatic legs watched by more than 100,000 fans.

AHOY THERE!

It was our pleasure at the home game against Queens Park Rangers to have as our guests some of the crew of Bolton's adopted Royal Navy ship HMS Dido.

The officers and lads of the vessel, who were on a short visit to the town, were keen to see Wanderers in action and enjoyed



seeing the team celebrate its 1-0 victory over Rangers.

Then, on the following Monday, they were down here at Burnden again for a friendly game played in good spirit. It was a pleasure to have the crew here with us and our best wishes go out to them all for the future.

"JUNIOR WHITES NEWS"

Earlier this month we held our Christmas Party Disco and what a super day was had by all! Special thanks must go to Nat Lofthouse and his staff who worked very hard indeed, whilst Alan Fullelove and Kevin Williams again made things go with a swing and the way these two have worked with the youngsters all year has helped the success of the "Junior Whites".

Enrolment is now due for next year, with our January meeting on Monday 11th January 1982 at 6.30 in the Executive Club being an Enrolment meeting, with most of the players attending. It costs £1.50 for a full year, of what you can be assured, is all action.

Today's mascot is DARREN PEARSON from Little Lever, who knows it might be your turn in the New Year!

Enjoy Your Christmas.

ROY CAVANAGH

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Everybody Matters at Bramall Lane

When a missed penalty in the final match of last season, against Walsall, sent Sheffield United scuttling down to the Fourth Division for the first time in the club's history, it was like the closing of a final curtain.

To many long suffering fans, relegation represented the ultimate insult for a club that until 1979 had never stepped out of the top two divisions. Removed from life at the top, it was a bitter pill to swallow.

Fortunately not everyone saw this as the end, some led by new chairman Reginald Brealey, saw it more as the beginning of a new era for one of England's most famous clubs.

The one time Australian sheep farmer, who is now a tremendously successful businessman, has introduced the same principles of executive structure that he applies to his own company's, with the team manager, secretary and commercial manager responsible for the every day running of the club.

In other words the board are letting the professionals get on with the job and the result has been quite amazing. On the field Ian Porterfield has made things happen and Sheffield United already look firm favourites to gain promotion, while behind the scenes Dick Chester and Derek Dooley are involved in an exciting development and promotion programme that could make Bramall Lane the Wembley of the north, and Sheffield United one of the best supported teams.

Success in the Fourth Division has pushed the average gate up to 11,500 but the Blades team are more interested at getting to those 30,000 or so dormant supporters who used to frequent the Bramall Road terraces.

Dick Chester the United secretary is the first to admit that in a lot of cases football is its own worst enemy when dealing with its public and that Sheffield United like the majority of big clubs have taken their clients for granted in the past. But now there is a different feeling around Bramall Lane, those missing fans have become important and the club are showing their concern.

"We are making a determined effort to make contact with those former fans," says Chester "and in this respect we have to make our selves a little more accessible for them and recognise their true value as supporters."

The big sell is now under way as Sheffield United try to provide better facilities for their customers. A new holding company called B.L.A.D.E.S. (1981) Ltd., has been formed — and that stands for Bramall Lane Aid and Development Enterprises — and incorporates the Blades Travel Club, Junior Blades, Blades Executive (1981) Ltd., and Blades Future Players Fund. All are separate autonomous companies with independent boards of directors.

PEOPLES PLAYER

All have one aim and that is to take Sheffield United back to the top. The Articles of Association provide for all profits made by these bodies to filter through to the parent club, but the main benefit will come from the facilities provided and the communication with the public.

Take for instance the Blades 1981 Future-Players-Fund. That is an

interesting one. It came about when a contingent of United supporters approached the club requesting permission to raise money to buy England midfielder Tony Currie. "You sign him we will pay his wages," was the offer. They were told the manager was not interested in Currie, but they might like to hang their hat on John McAlle who he was then contemplating signing from Wolves.

They agreed and now run regular social evenings to raise the cash to pay the centrehalf's salary... John McAlle has become the peoples player, someone for them to identify with.

Derek Dooley the commercial manager has been seven years on the job. He is responsible for the Travel Club which not only makes a profit but controls the supporters at away games and so acts as a deterrent to acts of violence and vandalism. Rochdale, Hereford and Scunthorpe are the attractions now although Derek is quick to point out; "only six years ago if we had won at Birmingham we would have been in Europe."

That is now the aim of the current progressive management and one of the reasons why so much time and effort goes into catering for the Junior Blades — tomorrows supporters. Explains Mr. Chester: "Whatever you do you have to look after them and give them value for money. We want to create affection for the club and that is not easy, it is a long term objective. But if you do not lay the foundations then you will never reap the rewards."

That same caring attitude spreads through the club. To Sheffield United everybody matters from the youngest fan on the terraces to the match day sponsor who has invested his hard cash in the game. The motto is the same — deal with them fair and square and give them good value.

When the new Executive Suite is opened in December it will signal the end of phase one of the development programme. The next stage is even more revolutionary and exciting and already the scheme has been put before the planners. The suggestion is to demolish the kop and erect another new two-tier stand providing a further 11,000 seats plus Executive Boxes.

How can a Fourth Division club finance such a venture? Well they have agreed to give up the free-hold ownership of the land for commercial development. The developers will build a stand which will incorporate a sports complex and a hotel together with 120,000 square feet of shopping space, and a car park for 800 cars. They will make their profits from these commercial outlets and in return provide Sheffield United with a spanking new stand absolutely free.

Further it is proposed to make provision for an eight lane running track which will provide South Yorkshire with a much needed facility and at the same time make Bramall Lane a community centre, so tightening the bond between club and the Sheffield public.

"You have to believe in the ultimate," says Dick Chester. "We have to plan to emulate Liverpool, have the best professional football team, the best stadium and facilities and the best income."

Sheffield United would certainly seem to have the back-room team with the drive and determination to lead the Blades to that promised land... just give them time!



LEN CANTELLO

AN ARTIST WITH A MISSION

A decade ago a young blond lad burst onto the football scene with West Bromwich Albion. He was strong, full of running had tremendous vision and the ability to transfer the ball quickly and accurately to his colleagues. The critics were bowled over by him, here they felt was a future international star!

Len Cantello was the name of this cultured performer who dominated and stamped his authority on his profession. Len went on to win eight caps for England at Under-23 level against East Germany, Wales, Holland (2), Denmark (2), Czechoslovakia and Poland between 1972 and 1974, but never made the transition to the senior team.

It was a mystery that confounded West Brom supporters for many years, for they had grown to love his classical style and elegant distribution as he performed at the heart of the Albion side.

So where did it all go wrong, why didn't Len Cantello take the international world by storm? "That was all a very long time ago," he smiles. "Where did it go wrong! I don't know really. I think if I was going to play international football it would have been at West Brom and would have followed on from my Under-23 career but it didn't and that's that."

While international honours were passing him by, Len continued to shine as the man at the fulcrum of Albion's attack and he remained a favourite with the fans until he was transferred to Bolton Wanderers after 12 glorious years at the Hawthorns.

The Lancashire club, paid out their record fee of £350,000 for his services in the summer of 1979: "I joined Bolton to be nearer home because I am a Manchester lad, and because I felt they had a good future because they had such a lot of good players on their books. People like Frank Worthington, Neil McNab and Peter Reid," he says adding: "Even now we have some very good players at Boundary Park, Alan Gowling, and Brian Kidd to name but two, yet we probably need a couple more in vital positions."

It is true to say that things have not gone quite as was envisaged since Len made the trip north. He hit Bolton at a bad time in their development: "Yes. I joined Bolton thinking that they were going to go places in the First Division, but they sold a lot of good players due to circumstances and we got relegated."

"Again last season wasn't a particularly good one for me until George Mulhall took over control and under him I seemed to play quite well at the end of the season."

CREATIVE

On the final run-in last season Bolton suffered only one defeat in their last eight games and that was good enough to stave off relegation. Unfortunately that form was not maintained in the new campaign and by the quarter way stage in the championship hunt, Wanderers found themselves trailing at the bottom of the pack. It was a situation which prompted manager George Mulhall to drop Len into a sweeper role behind the back-four.

"The idea was to stem the flow of goals streaming into our own net," explains Cantello. "While the back four are marking man to man I cover from behind and that has tightened things up a bit better."

"It doesn't always work of course... it didn't at Norwich where I moved forward in front of the back line in the second-half and that improved our performance."

"When it does work I quite like it. It gives me a lot of the ball, as much in fact as if I was playing in midfield and I can create situations from that deep position just as well as I can from midfield."

"But I don't see myself as converting into a permanent sweeper. At the moment it is just a ploy to deal with a situation we are in, I will always be a midfield man I think."

"I don't see it as a long term policy for Bolton either. There are not many clubs play with a sweeper in English football although it is not a bad policy if you have the right players to carry it out. But we will see. If it helps Bolton Wanderers and is successful then fine, maybe other teams will adopt it and it will become common practice. I know West Brom tried it with Bryan Robson in the role but I am not sure whether they felt it worked or not."

HOPE

"For the player in the sweeper position it can mean a lot more involvement in the game because he is the free man. If it comes off then it is pretty solid as a defensive measure but it can be thrown into all sorts of confusion if the opposition have a player capable of beating one of the markers. Because they are playing a man to man game it means that the whole defence will be pulled out of position and that can be disastrous."

"But although our position in the League table is sickening for us all, supporters as well as players, I don't think this season is over for Bolton by a long chalk. We have played quite well in patches and can still finish in a respectable position."

"The three points for a win will help us. What it has meant is that a draw is virtually a defeat so the clubs which have been drawing are not that much better than those which have lost and it now only needs three good wins to push us nine points up the League. This can give clubs in our position hope."

"It is all down to us. Kidd, Gowling and Cantello might be big names on the Bolton team sheet, but it is out there on the park where it counts and if we don't do it on the day then we are not worth the paper it is printed on."

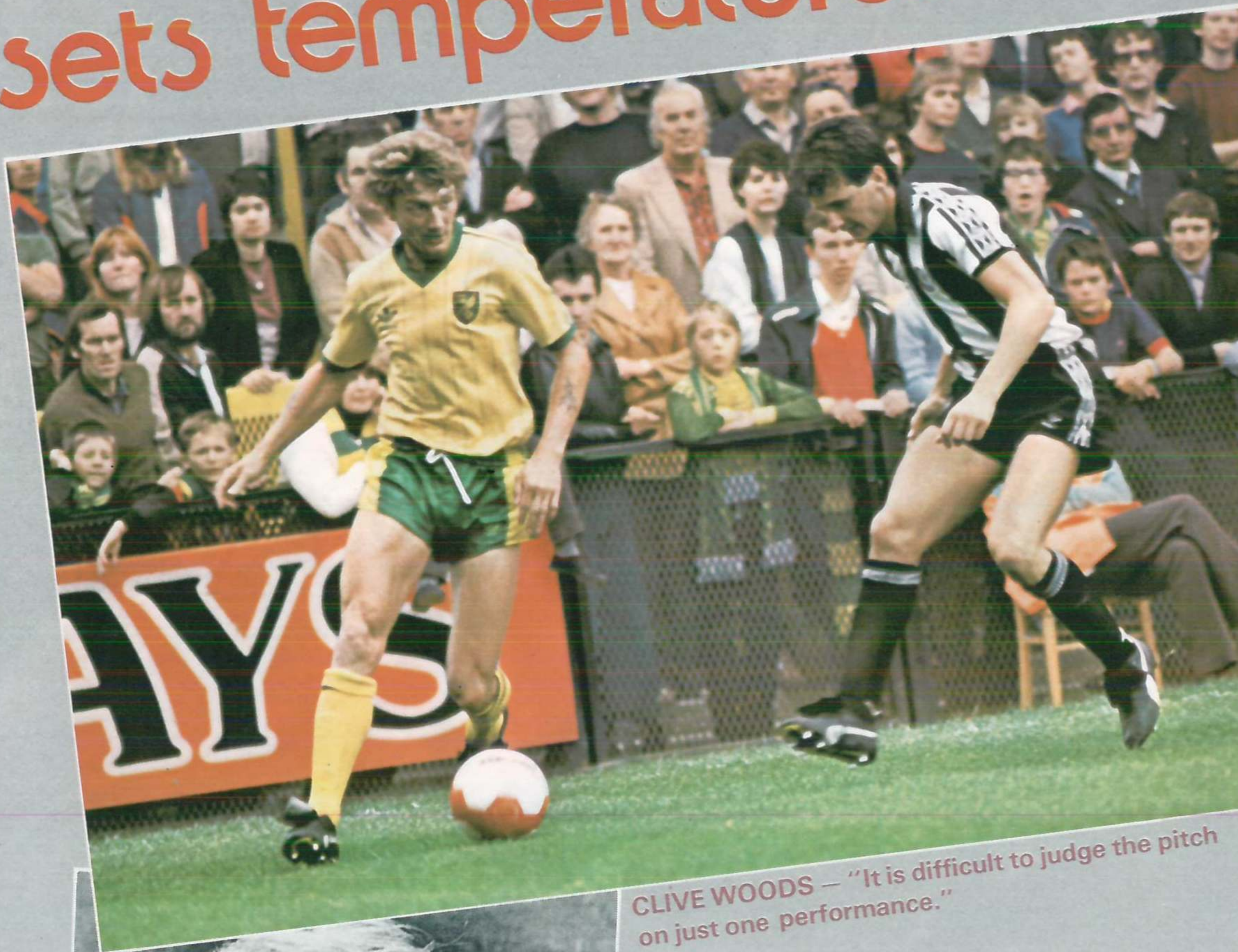
"Of course when you are losing it does affect your confidence — there is a little bit of tension, we are a bit tight when we go out, afraid of making mistakes, but we can do it and give those supporters who have stood by us something to shout about. There is a lot of hope, a lot of things to look forward to yet."

Now 30 years old, Len Cantello still has a lot to offer. He has thrilled countless thousands of fans in his time, enjoyed the good times and weathered the bad. Never a prolific scorer he has preferred to play deep and this is a role he can perform for a few more seasons to come.



REPORT BY COLIN BENSON

Rangers Plastic Pitch sets temperatures rising



CLIVE WOODS — "It is difficult to judge the pitch on just one performance."



JOCK WALLACE — Leicester City's angry boss.

WHEN LEICESTER CITY'S straight talking boss Jock Wallace slammed the £350,000 synthetic carpet at Queens Park Rangers, he was just adding considerable weight to a mounting opposition to the 'Omniturf' pitch.

Wallace claimed Rangers have been given a clear home advantage this season because of the surface "and it should not be allowed." That opinion seems to be fully justified by the collective performances of visiting teams to Loftus Road.

When Rotherham United scraped a 1-1 draw there in the first week of November — and that was by courtesy of Rangers Gerry Francis who scored an own goal — they became the first visiting team to take a point or even score a goal on the new pitch, in seven consecutive League games.

It would seem that the plastic pitch has not quite been the revelation anticipated by its mentors, when they decided to take the gamble last summer. Then it was claimed that it would enrich the game, provide the perfect

stage for skill and technique, a platform on which to improve the games value as a spectator sport and serve up exciting entertainment for the fans.

But has it? Not from what we can gather from visiting teams or from what I have seen there myself.

The first impression one gets is of players playing on hard frosty grounds, tentative in their approach to tackle, nervous to turn too quickly or sharply . . . it makes them hesitant and unsure.

The traditional long through ball is also a non-starter, the ball gathering such pace when it hits the ground that it either shoots straight through to the goalkeeper or out of play.

Thus a short passing game is required but even that is difficult. I watched Norwich City one of the better teams at this skill get into all kinds of trouble because of the difficulty in judging the weight of the ball. Too soft and it is easily cut out . . . too firm and it is difficult to control, the ball not dying on the surface but spinning away from the touch.

And when it comes to turning it becomes a lottery. As I said earlier, defenders give the impression that they are performing on hard frosty surfaces and once a pass is hit behind an intended target it is impossible for that player to check and retrieve and so make a bad ball a good one.

Before they played at Loftus Road, Norwich manager Ken Brown had emphasised his support for Rangers adventure saying that he would reserve his judgement, adding: "All I can say is full marks to Rangers for taking the gamble. We should never knock anything which might improve the game."

However the experience markedly changed his attitude and he later confided:

"It is definitely a different game. You have to play the way you are facing because it is very difficult to turn and passes have to be made to feet rather than to space in front and this prevents players running onto the ball smoothly.

"I must admit that after playing there I now have mixed feelings as to whether it produces the type of football British spectators want to see. It was difficult to keep moves flowing and therefore the game became disjointed, strewn with errors from both sides . . . I am glad we only have to play on it once."

Rangers manager Terry Venables needed some convincing before he lent his weight to this revolutionary imposition on the English league scene and he claims: "This pitch suites players who can pass the ball well and have skill. I preach to my players that their first touch has to be good and their passing accurate.

"But then that applies to any ground — it is just that on grass you can sometimes get away with a loose ball or two if they hold up in the mud.

"On our pitch there are no inconsistencies like that. Take a normal turfed pitch. At the beginning and end of the season it is bone hard with the ball bouncing high. As the season gets under way the grounds become softer and then heavy when the ball just goes plop. That is inconsistent. On our pitch the bounce is constantly true."

The trouble is if the surface is too true then it becomes predictable and that takes half the excitement out of the game, makes it stereotyped and uninteresting.

The maxim that an artificial surface eliminates all the natural elements obstructing skill is all very well in theory but does it work in practice? I think not. The most destructive intrusion on any football game is wind... and no matter what the surface only an indoor arena can combat that. As for mud and heavy pitches surely they help to cultivate the unexpected, that is the hallmark of the English game.

Jock Wallace has no reservations. He declares forcefully: "Football in America is dying on its feet because most of the clubs play on pitches like the one at QPR. I toured there with Glasgow Rangers twice and told them at the time they won't get football right until they play on grass."

And if you listen to Blackburn Rovers manager Bobby Saxton you are left in no doubt as to his view on the pitches value. After losing 2-0 on the controversial surface he declared: "There is only one way to play on it and that is to stick eight men behind the ball, thump it upfield and hope you have got a player fast enough to catch it before it runs out of play at the other end." I suspect that battle plan was born more out of frustration than tactical assessment, but you can understand the feeling.

Mind you I have spoken to several players on the subject and they have not been so critical. Norwich City winger Clive Woods for instance observed: "I don't think the surface played too badly, it took us a half to get used to it but it is difficult to judge the pitch on just one performance. I suppose the more you play on it the better you get."

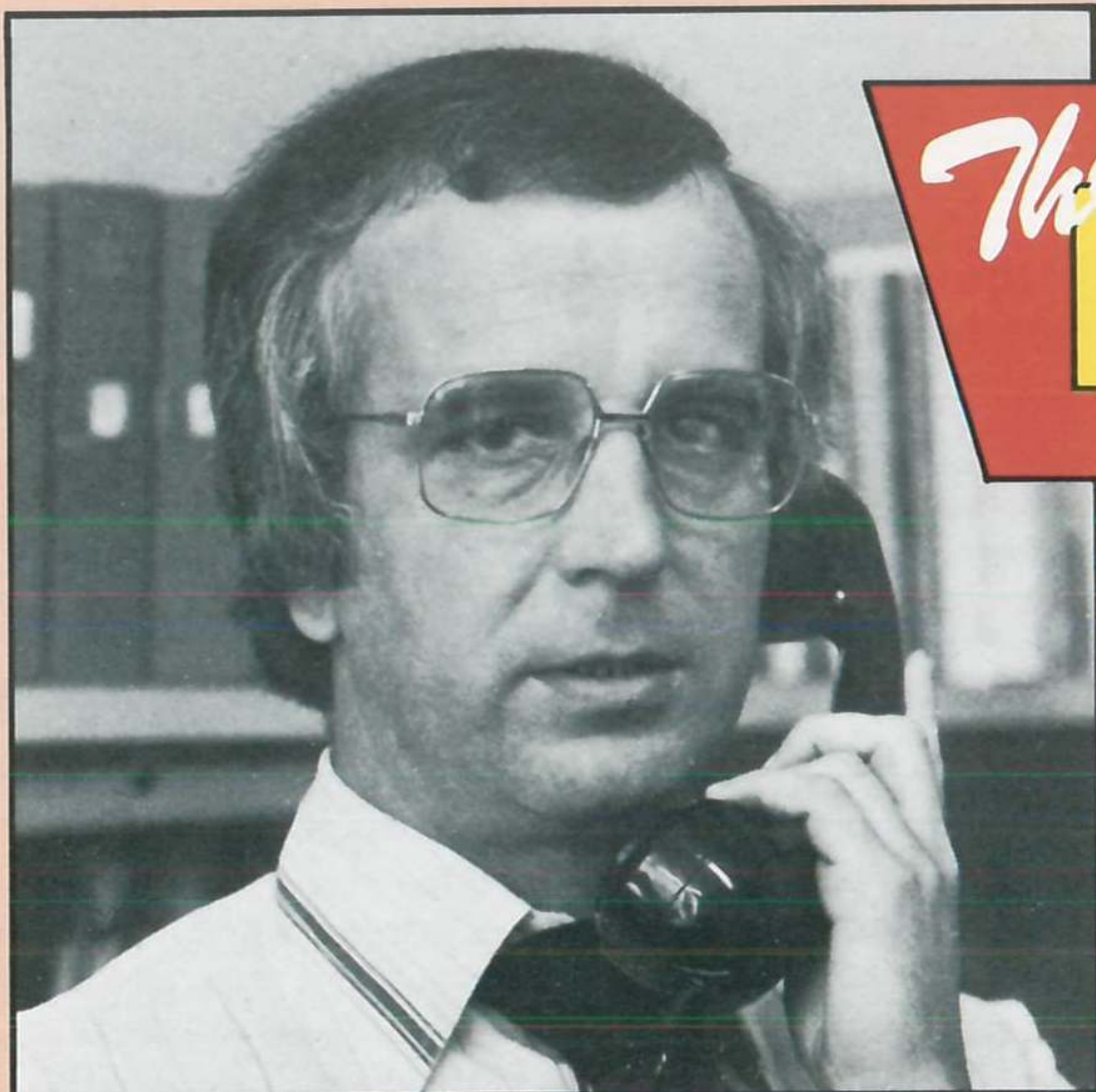
Even Rangers have not become fully acclimatised with the conditions and Venables admits: "We're still learning about the pitch," although both Gerry Francis and Tony Currie have intimated a dislike for the compound which jars aching limbs.

Indeed even Venable concedes: "We have found the surface much more tiring for players and this is particularly noticeable when we have two home games within a few days. I think it shows in our play."

The medical experts in America have always claimed that there is no long term effect generated by artificial pitches but it is obvious that joints must take more of a pounding on a surface that has very little give in it.

However it is purely from the shop window view that I make my assessment and from what I have seen at Loftus Road this season I conclude that plastic football fields are not the answer to dwindling support. The surface certainly does not make for more exciting play an opinion that has been endorsed for me by TV clips of NASL games in the States.

Mind you there is no criticism towards QPR for trying. It was a bold initiative on their part and perhaps it can be improved. Ken Brown did suggest that if they made the length of the fibre grass a little longer it might take some of the pace off the ball, and that would help, but as for making football more entertaining I think it is a non-starter . . . for English fans at least.



Living on a shoestring

IT ALWAYS seemed faintly ironic that the BBC should have chosen the name Shoestring for that rather unconventional sleuth, who was based in Bristol.

Soccer lovers, particularly those from the County of Avon, will more readily associate shoestring with the size of the budgets under which the two local football clubs have been forced to operate.

And it would take more than a fictional television hero to unravel the problems that have faced City and Rovers in the last couple of years.

The problem is that despite its size and large catchment area Bristol is not steeped in any great football tradition. Yet even that doesn't really account for the most miserable 12 months in the area's football life.

It was bad enough, for example, that Rovers' Eastville ground had been ravaged by a serious fire. It was bad enough, too, that City's merited and hard earned place in the First Division, should have been lost in a valiant but forlorn fight against relegation.

But in the spring of 1981 the whole situation was worsened when City finished 21st and Rovers 22nd in the Second Division

— Bristol's double relegation.

Both clubs have records which have suggested that they have never been able to truly consolidate their places even in the Second Division — but the City itself had never known anything quite like the disappointment of double failure.

City had been in the First Division way back at the start of the century. They even finished First Division runners-up in 1907 but after relegation in 1911 they were consigned to a life in the lower spheres until 1976 when, under Alan Dicks, they finally regained a First Division place.

Despite their unfamiliar name in the First Division, it was a promotion that was widely championed. Bristol deserved to take its place alongside the other big city sides at the top of the tree.

Rovers, on the other hand, had never aspired to the First Division heights. The younger of the two teams they have varied, in post-war years between the Second and Third Divisions.

They have always tended to be regarded as the other side in Bristol even though there have been occasions when they have been playing in the Second Division while City have been struggling away in the Third.

But they share the same dilemma. They have always had to sell to survive and successive managers at both Ashton Gate and Eastville have only ventured into the transfer market as bargain hunters.

It is quite astonishing that this should have been the case in an area as large as Bristol. They have received singularly little help from the City Council and as it was pointed out at the end of last season, it contrasts heavily with a club like Swansea. There the City fathers decision to buy the stadium (The Vetch) and lease it back to the Football Club provided the launch pad from which John Toshack took his side from the Fourth to the First Division in a ridiculously short time.

Even when City did make the First Division their manager for 13 years, Alan Dicks, was never able to plunder the transfer market to capture big money signings. He had to buy

experience at a relatively low cost — men like Joe Royle, Peter Cormack and Norman Hunter.

They did the job for a while and there was always the hope that youngsters like the Mabbutt brothers, Kevin at City, Gary at Rovers, would one day prompt a change of financial fortunes at the clubs.

City even tied down most of their players to incredibly long and secure contracts as they fought to survive in the First Division. But when the crunch came and City were relegated they had to sell . . . and are still selling.

Even now they are finding the need to earn cash through the transfer market. Clive Whitehead a talented utility player who had been much sought by a number of teams, switched to West Bromwich Albion. Kevin Mabbutt was transferred to London and Crystal Palace.

The rival managers in Bristol are young men still discovering the problems of running clubs like City and Rovers. Bobby Houghton, a man whose inspiration and tactical ability once steered Swedish Malmo to a European Cup Final engagement with Nottingham Forest, is in charge at Ashton Gate.

At Eastville there has been a managerial change at Rovers where Bobby Gould has taken over from former boss Terry Cooper.

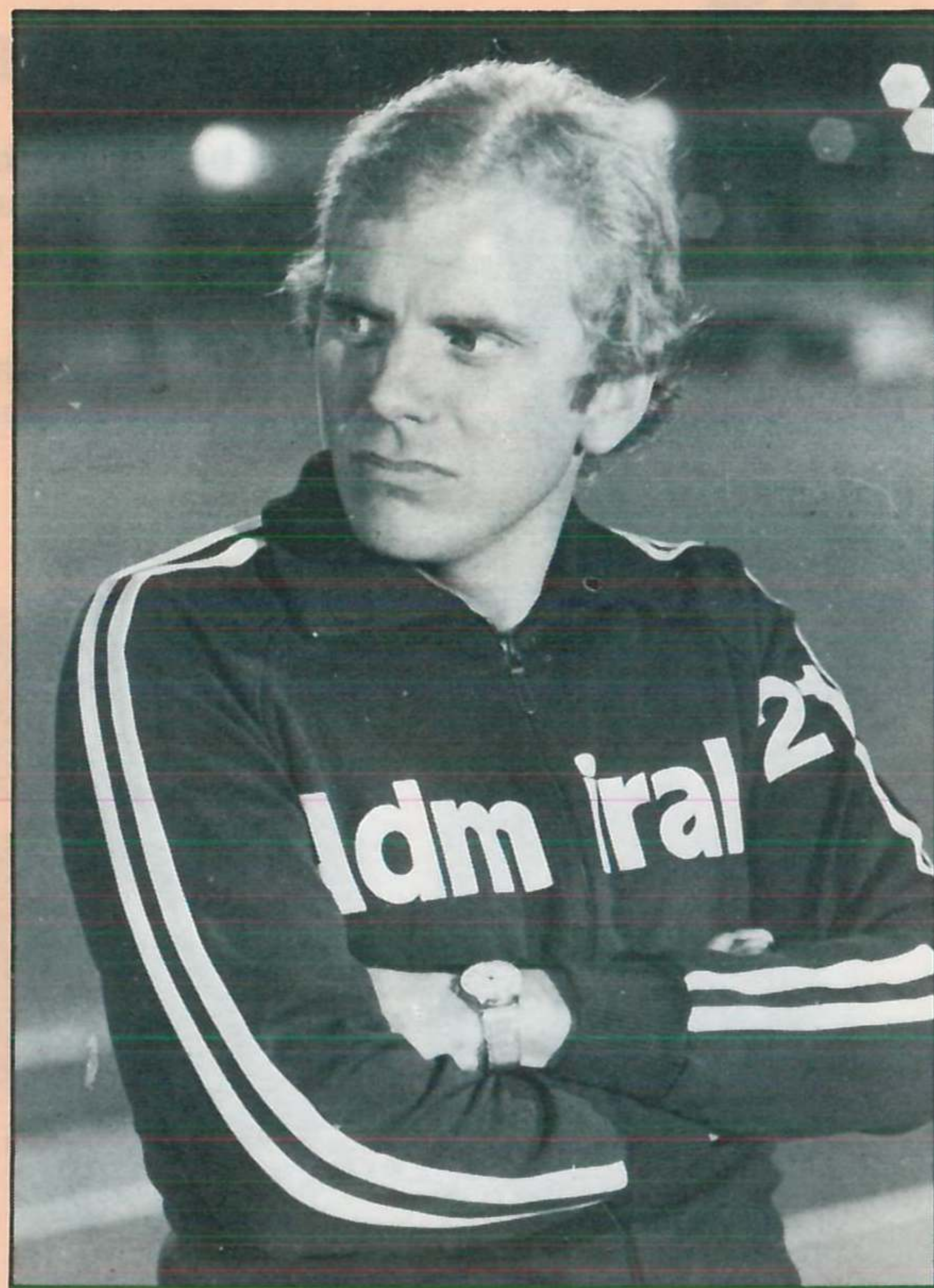
Both have a formidable task in lifting Bristol out of the soccer shadows. Houghton has already discovered the difficulties in selling to survive, but his record at Malmo shows that he is capable of producing the best results from limited opportunities.

Gould's arrival followed his departure, with Geoff Hurst, from Chelsea. He is a man of many English Football League clubs. The story goes that when Gould applied for another Football League management job a couple of years ago a director asked him why he had travelled so much. Because, Gould is said to have replied, all the clubs that signed him were assured that they would get 100 per cent effort in return.

Now Gould will be looking for that same effort from the men who wear the famous blue and white quarters of Rovers. There will be league derby matches with Bobby Houghton's city and matches against the likes of Reading, Exeter, Newport and Plymouth who don't have too many motorway hours to travel.

In the early weeks of the season neither Rovers nor City were particularly involved in the promotion issue. But these are early days. Gould and Houghton know that success will be achieved by their own ability and not with recourse to the cheque book.

Somewhere like Bristol, let's face it, should have something to crow about in the football world.



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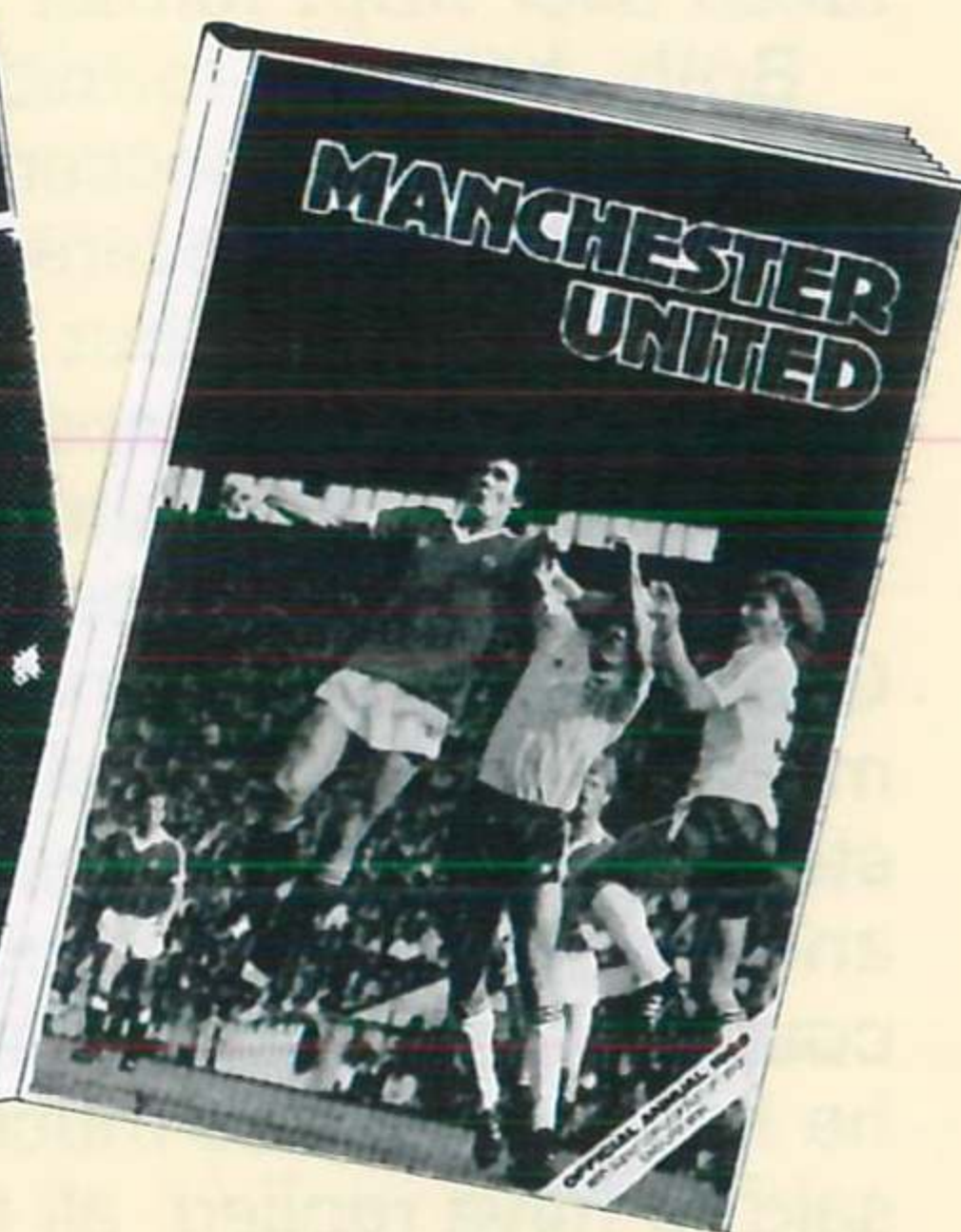
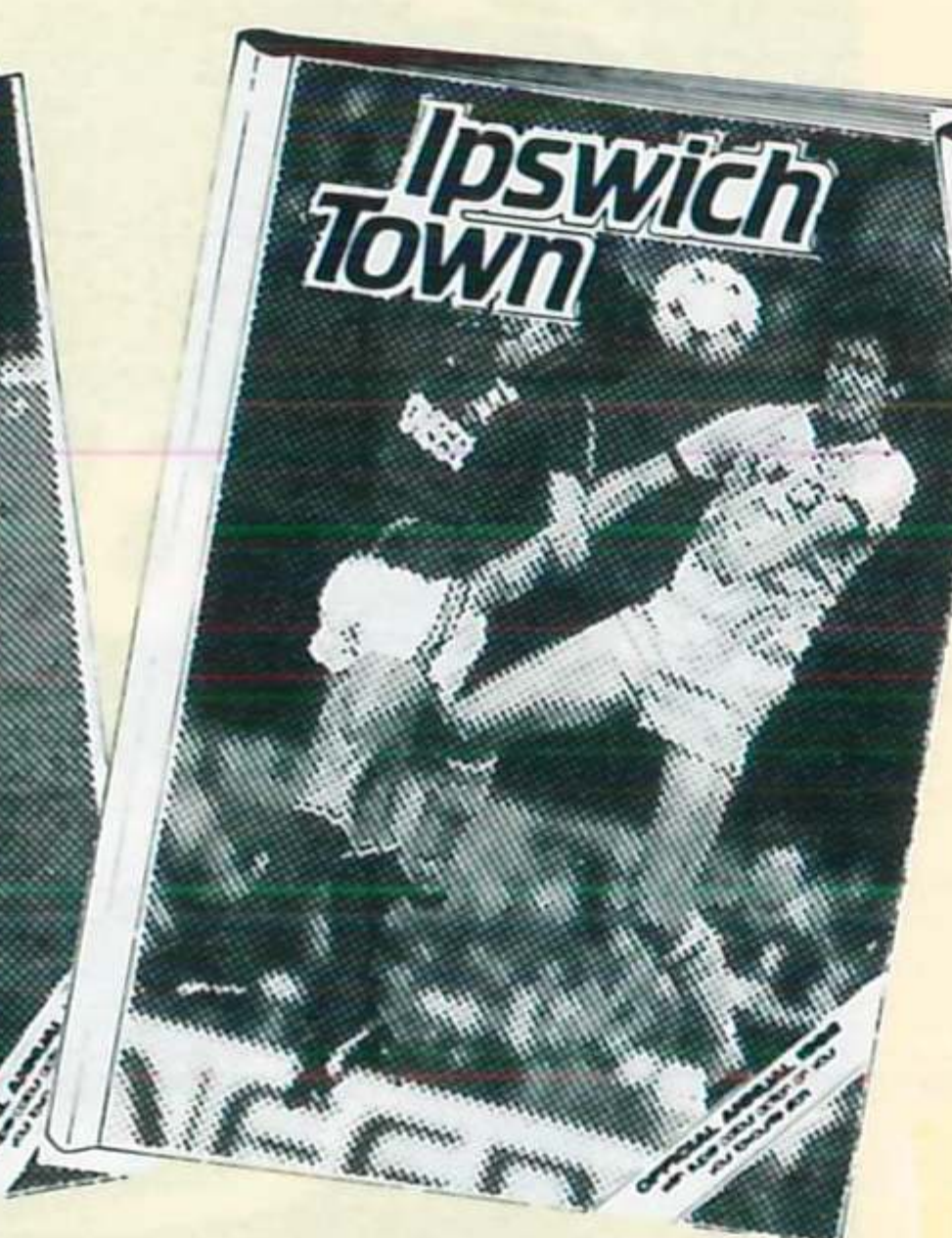
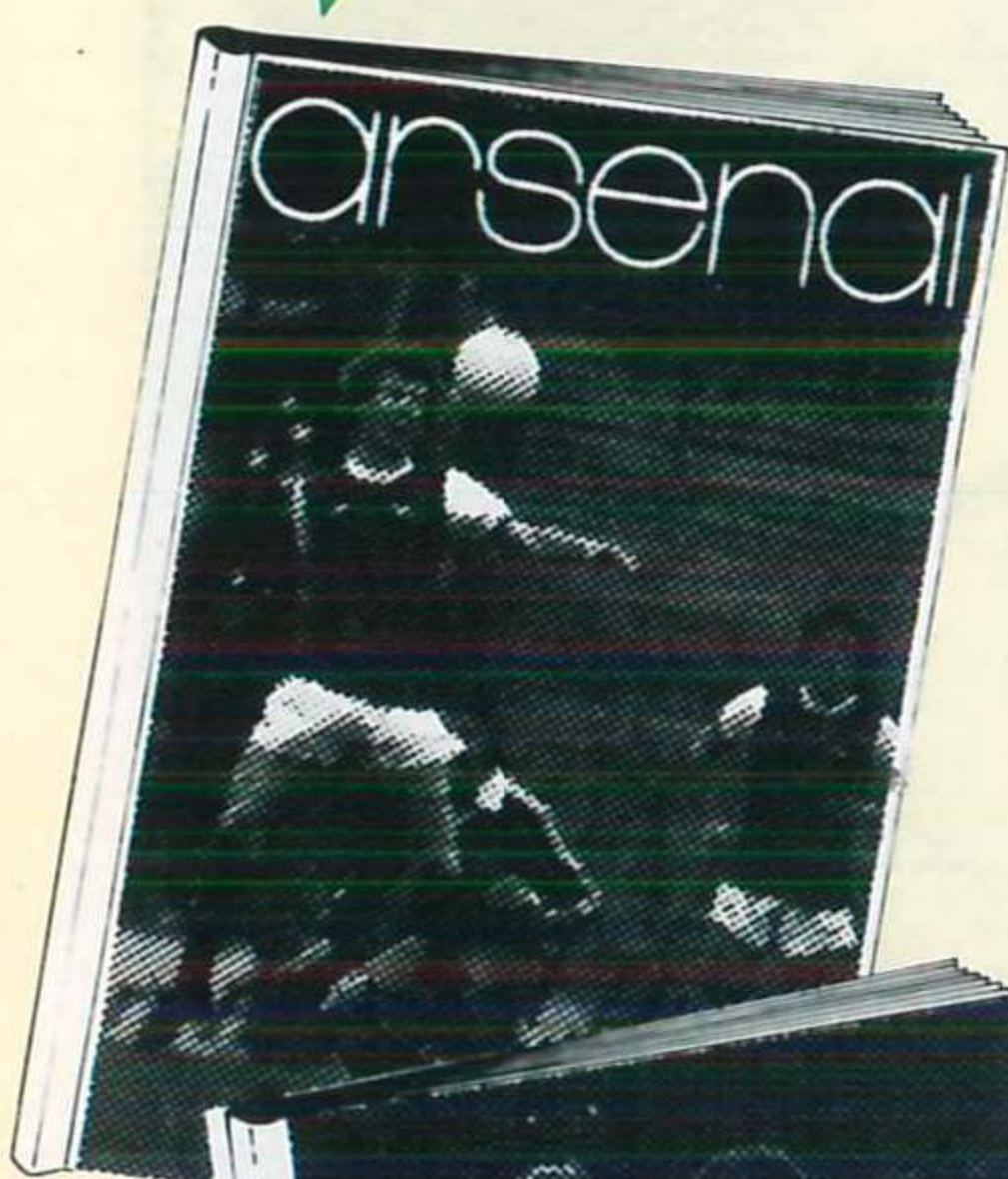


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BOLTON RECORD

Part 54
Season 1952/53

FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Division One	Home	Away
Arsenal	4-6	1-4
Aston Villa	0-0	1-1
Blackpool	4-0	0-3
Burnley	1-2	1-0
Cardiff	0-1	0-1
Charlton	1-2	0-2
Chelsea	1-1	0-1
Derby	2-0	3-4
Liverpool	2-2	0-0
Manchester City	1-0	2-1
Manchester United	2-1	0-1
Middlesbrough	5-3	2-1
Newcastle	4-2	3-2
Portsmouth	0-5	1-3
Preston	0-3	2-2
Sheffield Wednesday	1-1	1-1
Stoke	2-1	2-1
Sunderland	5-0	0-2
Tottenham	2-3	1-1
W.B.A.	0-1	1-0
Wolves	2-1	1-3

LEAGUE SCORERS

Lofthouse	22	Moir	17
Hassall	7	Langton	4
Wheeler	3	Holden	2
Beards	2	Parry	1
Hughes	1	Webster	1
Neill	1		

F.A. CUP

Rd.	3— Fulham (h)	3-1
	4— Notts Co. (h)	1-1
	(a)	2-2
	(h)	1-0
	5— Luton (a)	1-0
	6— Gateshead (a)	1-0
SF	— Everton	4-3
	(at Maine Road)	
F.	— Blackpool	3-4
	(at Wembley)	

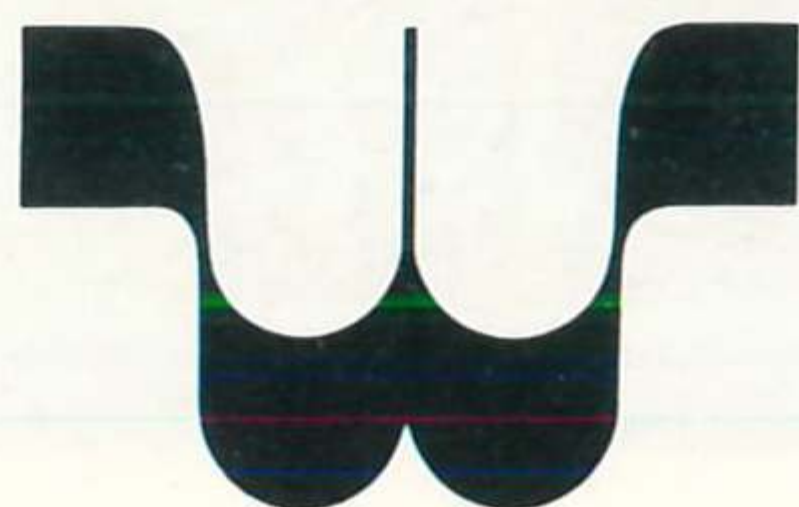
FOOTBALL LEAGUE appearances:

Ball J.	26	Banks R.	11
Banks T.	4	Barrass M. W.	38
Beards A.	10	Bell E.	15
Codd R. W.	2	Edwards G. B.	14
Gubbins R. G.	1	Hanson S.	42
Hartle L. R.	17	Hassall H. W.	33
Higgins G.	28	Higgins J. O.	2
Holden A. D.	33	Hughes W.	4
Langton R.	20	Lofthouse N.	36
Mathewson R.	2	McIlwaine M.	2
Moir W.	37	Neill T. K.	23
Parry R. A.	15	Pilling V.	6
Webster H.	7	Wheeler J. E.	34

DIVISION I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	42	21	12	9	97	64	54
Preston N.E.	42	21	12	9	85	60	54
Wolverhampton W.	42	19	13	10	86	63	51
W.B.A.	42	21	8	13	66	60	50
Charlton Athletic	42	19	11	12	77	63	49
Burnley	42	18	12	12	67	52	48
Blackpool	42	19	9	14	71	70	47
Manchester Utd.	42	18	10	14	69	72	46
Sunderland	42	15	13	14	68	82	43
Tottenham	42	15	11	16	78	69	41
Aston Villa	42	14	13	15	63	61	41
Cardiff City	42	14	12	16	54	46	40
Middlesbrough	42	14	11	17	70	77	39
Bolton Wanderers	42	15	9	18	61	69	39
Portsmouth	42	14	10	18	74	83	38
Newcastle United	42	14	9	19	59	70	37
Liverpool	42	14	8	20	61	82	36
Sheffield Wed.	42	12	11	19	62	72	35
Chelsea	42	12	11	19	56	66	35
Manchester City	42	14	7	21	72	87	35
Stoke City	42	12	10	20	53	66	34
Derby County	42	11	10	21	59	74	32

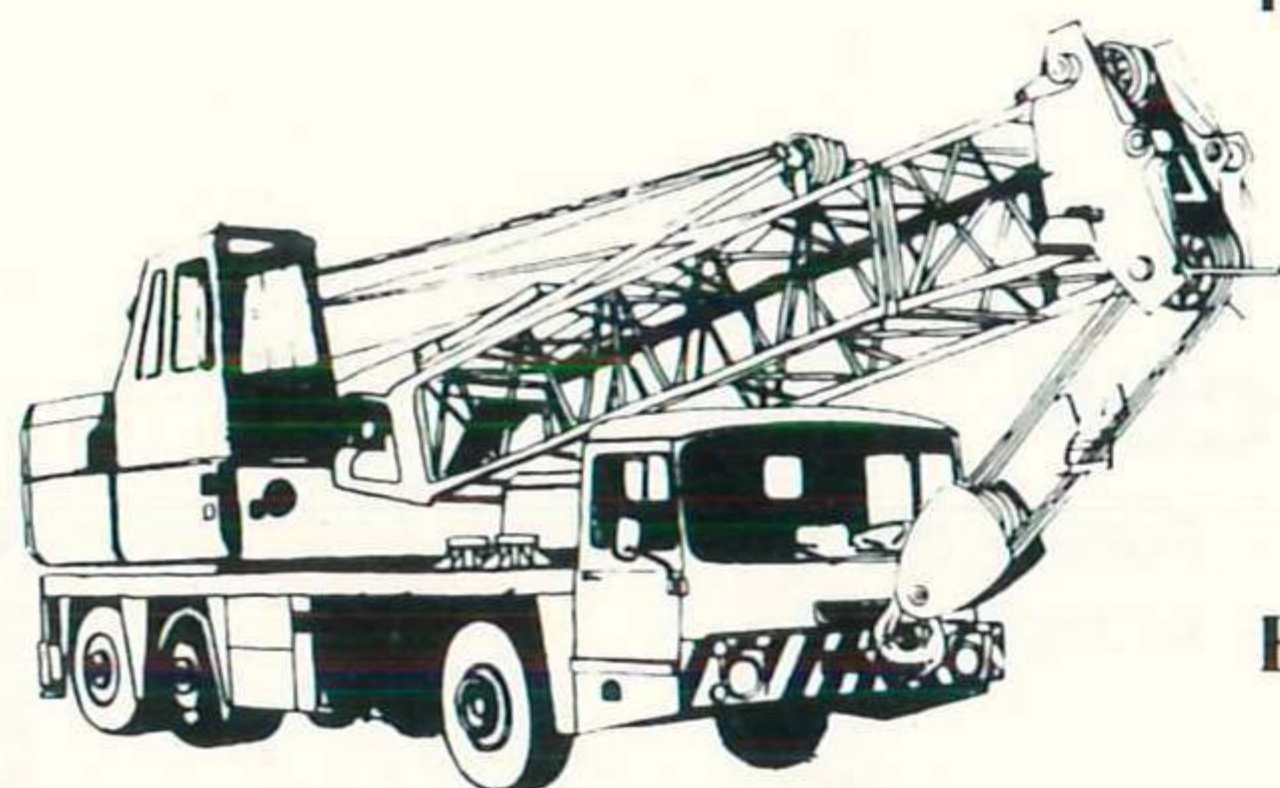
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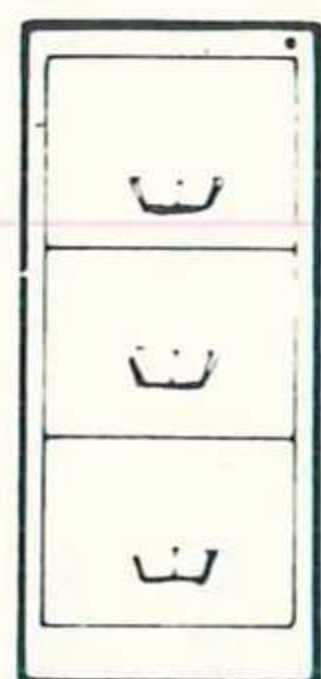
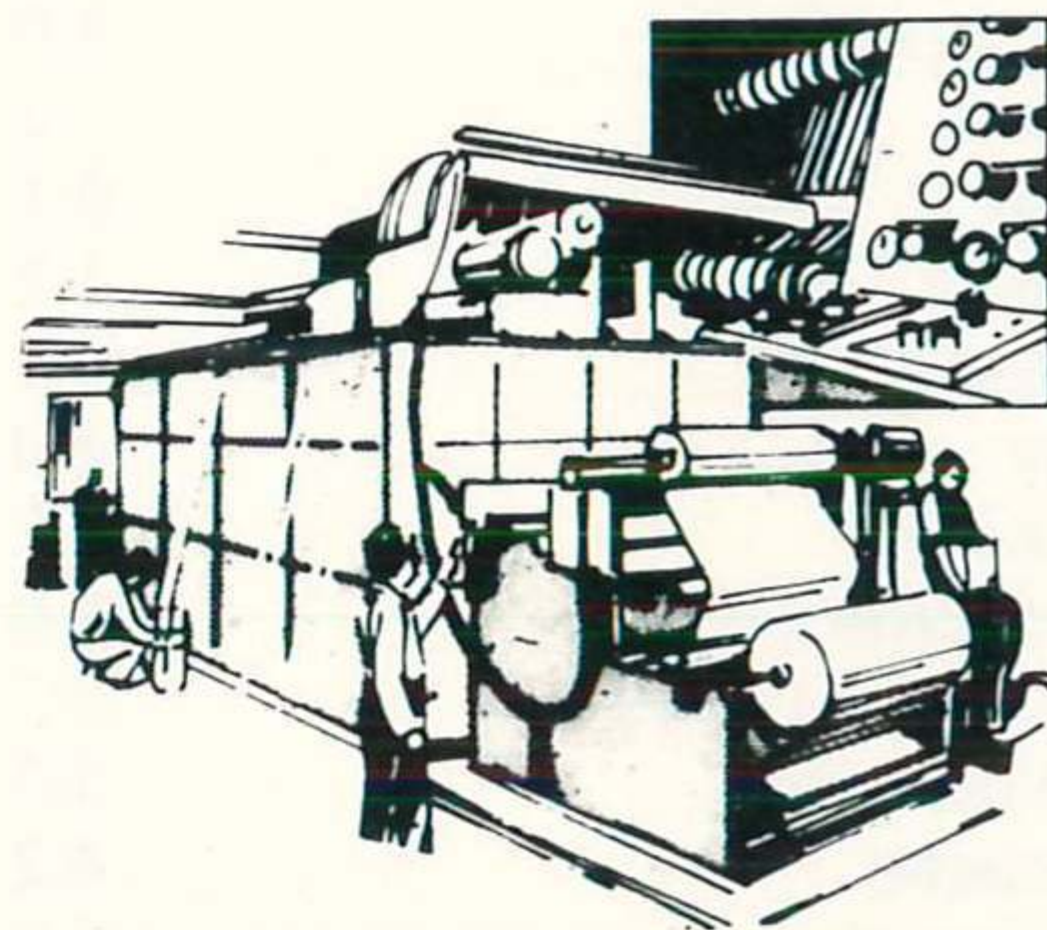
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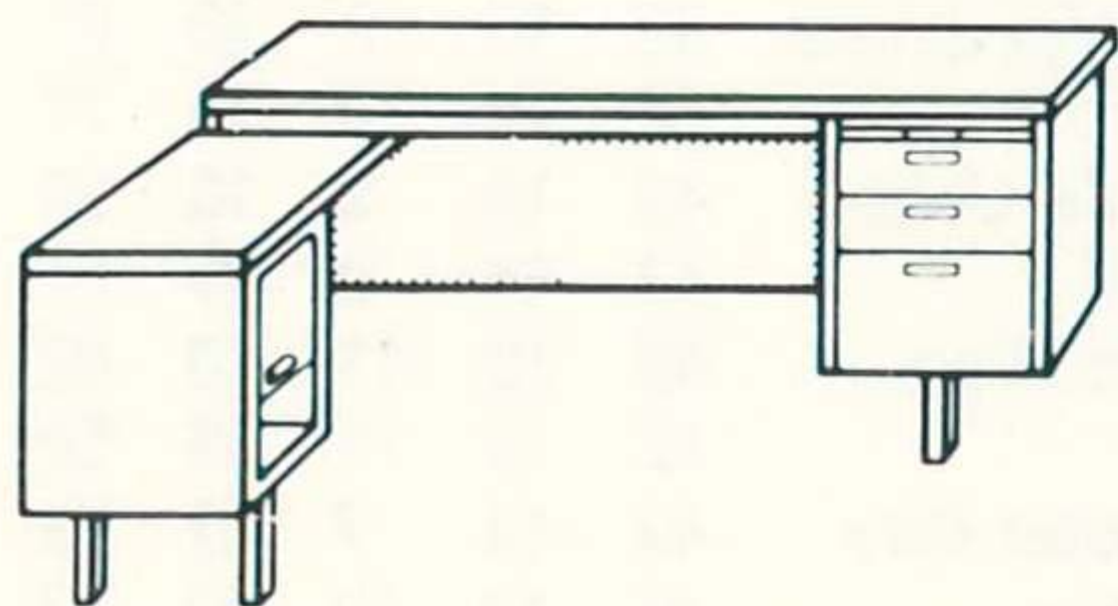
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Burnden Park NEWS



by MARTIN TYLER

There's more than a touch of the Eddie Shoestring's about being a football commentator.

Especially in one respect. When you are trying to check the ages of our senior players, the detective work is essential because the over thirty brigade are less than forthcoming.

However, it's an understandable reticence because the game, wrongly in my belief, quickly equates the passing of years with a rapid diminishing of playing skill.

But as I write Crewe Alexandra have won three and drawn one of their last five games, recharged by the introduction of thirty nine year old Ian Callaghan. Peter Noble at thirty seven still has his legs and his eye for goal and Noble has kept Blackpool among

the front runners in Division Four. Pat Howard, another solid experienced professional the wrong side of thirty, was told at the start of the season by his manager, Jim Iley, at Bury that he would quickly be replaced in the first team. Howard has responded with such consistency that he's not missed a game this season.

If you saw Manchester City demolish Swansea on a recent MATCH TIME, you will have readily appreciated the part played by thirty four year old Tommy Hutchison. John Bond had already admitted that he now sees the graceful Scottish forward as a player for only fifteen to twenty games a season. But pressed in to service because of City's injury problems, Hutchison exuded quality. On the same afternoon Dennis Tueart, thirty two later that week, took his total of goals to six in four games.

The case of Howard Kendall at Everton also fits in to my belief that the game rejects its elderly too quickly. With Kendall of course he has been rejecting himself. His return to First Division action at Notts County drew plaudits from all quarters. Yet the following Saturday he left himself out of the starting line up, even though his assistant, Mick Heaton, revealed to us on KICK OFF that he would like to see Howard stay in the Everton side for up to two more years!

And then there's Alan Ball! Still a majestic passer of the ball at thirty six and with a wise head to restrict his running to key areas of the game. In November he was back in the North

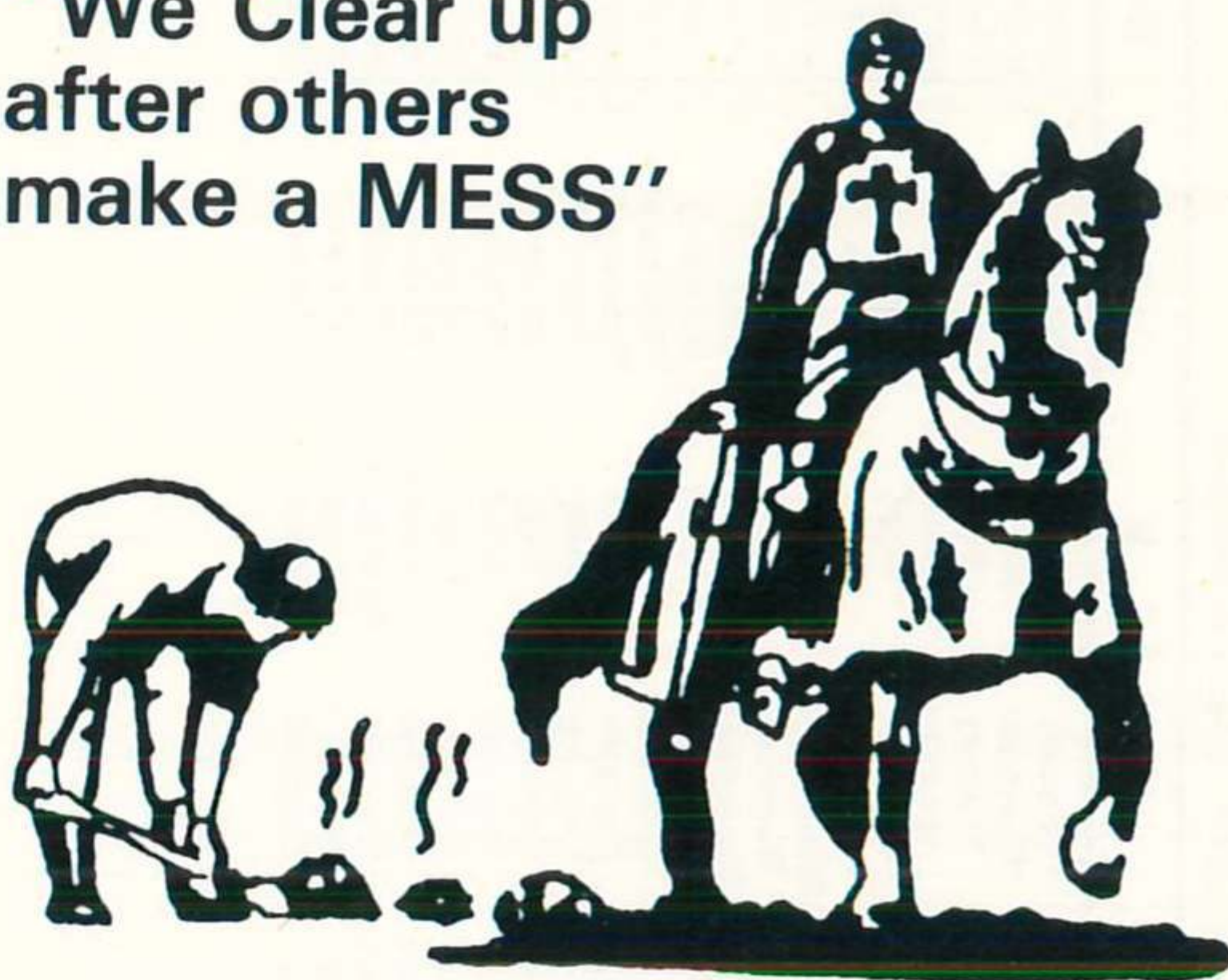
West to haunt Liverpool again. It was in August 1962 that Ball made his first League appearance for Blackpool, ironically at Anfield. Blackpool won 2-1 and he of course was also a winner at Liverpool with Everton and Arsenal. Last month he completed a remarkable set with Southampton.

On the day of that win, Southampton's Mick Channon also celebrated his thirty third birthday. "Can I just confirm how old you are?", I asked one of the games friendliest characters just before the kick off. "Not flipping likely!", Channon replied.

With football quick to write off its veterans his reluctance wasn't too hard to understand. So it was back to the detective work again. . .

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Football League, Div 2, 1981-82

1981/82	Opponents	Att.	F	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Aug	Chelsea	16,606	0	2	McDonagh	Nicholson	Brennan	McElhinney	Jones	Gowling	Thomas	Thompson	Hoggan	Cantello	Reid	Nikolic
Sept	LC1 (1L) Oldham	5,156	2	1	McDonagh	Nicholson	Bennett	McElhinney	Jones	Gowling	Thomas	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Reid	Thompson
	Luton Town	6,911	1	2	McDonagh	Nicholson	Bennett	McElhinney	Jones	Gowling	Thomas	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Reid	Thompson
Oct	Barnsley	13,844	0	3	McDonagh	Nicholson	Bennett	McElhinney	Jones	Gowling	Thomas	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Reid	Thompson
	LC1 (2L) Oldham	4,779	2	4	McDonagh	Nicholson	Bennett	Brennan	Jones	Gowling	Nikolic	Kidd	Hoggan	Thompson	Carter	Berry
Oct	Oldham Athletic	7,222	0	2	McDonagh	Henry	Bennett	Brennan	Jones	Gowling	Thompson	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Carter	Nicholson
	Derby County	12,066	2	0	McDonagh	Nicholson	Bennett	Henry	McElhinney	Gowling	Thompson	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Hebbard	Carter
Nov	Rotherham United	6,998	0	2	Peacock	Jones	Bennett	Henry	McElhinney	Gowling	Thompson	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Hebbard	Foster
	Newcastle United	6,429	1	0	Peacock	Jones	Bennett	Henry	McElhinney	Gowling	Thompson	Carter	Hoggan	Cantello	Hebbard	Foster
Nov	Grimsby Town	7,217	1	2	Peacock	Jones	Bennett	Henry	McElhinney	Gowling	Thompson	Carter	Hoggan	Cantello	Hebbard	Thomas
	Leicester City	7,361	0	3	McDonagh	Jones	Bennett	Henry	McElhinney	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Thompson	Cantello	Hebbard	Thomas
Dec	Cardiff City	3,879	1	2	McDonagh	Bennett	Brennan	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Thompson	Cantello	Hebbard	Hoggan
	Cambridge United	5,751	3	4	McDonagh	Whitworth	Brennan	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Thompson	Hoggan	Bennett	Foster
Jan	Norwich City	12,991	0	0	McDonagh	Whitworth	Bennett	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Thompson	Thomas
	Watford	7,066	2	0	McDonagh	Whitworth	Bennett	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Thompson	Foster
Feb	Shrewsbury Town	4,062	0	2	McDonagh	Whitworth	Bennett	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Thompson	Foster
	Orient	5,737	1	0	McDonagh	Whitworth	Bennett	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Thompson	Foster
Mar	Luton Town	8,889	0	2	McDonagh	Whitworth	Bennett	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Hoggan	Foster
	Crystal Palace	8,839	0	1	McDonagh	Whitworth	Bennett	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Hoggan	Foster
April	Queens Park Rangers	6,076	1	0	McDonagh	Whitworth	Bennett	Henry	Jones	Gowling	Chandler	Kidd	Hoggan	Cantello	Hoggan	Thompson
	F.A. Cup Final															Thompson

BURNDEN DATES

LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

BLACKBURN ROVERS

MONDAY 28th DECEMBER 1981

KICK-OFF 3.00 p.m.

To be arranged:
Sheffield Wednesday

STATISTICS

LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

(Up to and including Saturday 12th December)

	HOME			GOALS			AWAY			GOALS		
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Luton Town	18	7	0	2	24	10	6	2	1	17	9	41
Watford	18	5	3	1	16	8	5	1	3	12	12	34
Oldham Athletic	18	5	4	0	15	6	4	2	3	13	11	33
Queens Park Rangers	19	7	2	1	15	3	3	1	5	12	14	33
Barnsley	19	7	1	1	17	4	2	2	6	13	17	30
Sheffield Wednesday	18	5	2	2	14	12	4	1	4	8	10	30
Chelsea	18	5	2	2	15	11	3	2	4	10	15	28
Blackburn Rovers	18	4	2	3	8	5	3	3	3	11	12	26
Leicester City	18	3	4	2	10	7	3	3	3	14	12	25
Newcastle United	18	6	2	1	15	5	1	1	7	8	14	24
Cardiff City	18	5	1	3	13	14	2	2	5	9	14	24
Norwich City	18	5	3	1	13	7	2	0	7	8	20	24
Crystal Palace	17	6	0	3	12	7	1	2	5	2	7	23
Shrewsbury Town	18	5	2	2	15	10	1	3	5	4	14	23
Charlton Athletic	18	6	0	3	19	13	0	4	5	8	18	22
Derby County	18	4	3	2	14	11	2	1	6	9	19	22
Rotherham United	17	6	1	2	20	9	0	2	6	5	16	21
Cambridge United	18	5	0	4	15	11	2	0	7	10	18	21
Wrexham	18	3	0	6	9	14	2	3	4	11	12	18
Orient	18	3	3	3	9	9	2	0	7	3	11	18
Grimsby Town	16	1	3	3	8	10	3	2	4	9	17	17
Bolton Wanderers	18	4	0	5	10	13	1	1	7	3	14	16

CENTRAL LEAGUE

1981-82	F	A
Aug. Sept.	0	4
1	0	6
5	1	6
8	1	1
12	0	3
19		
26	1	4
3	1	4
9	1	3
17	1	2
24		
31	2	1
7		
10	1	1
14	3	1
17	3	4
21	0	3
24	1	3
28	1	2
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EVERTON	COVENTRY CITY	PRESTON N.E.	STOKE CITY	COVENTRY CITY	DERBY COUNTY	MANCHESTER UTD.	NOTTINGHAM F.	HUDDERSFIELD T.	BLACKBURN R.	NEWCASTLE UTD.	SHEFFIELD UTD.	WEST BROM. A.	BURNLEY	MANCHESTER Utd.	SHEFFIELD WED.	DERBY COUNTY	LIVERPOOL	ASTON VILLA	BLACKPOOL	WOLVERHAMPTON W.	LEEDS UNITED
Coventry City	Nottingham Forest	Newcastle Utd.	Burnley	Huddersfield T.	West Brom. A.	Leeds United	Everton	Blackburn R.	Manchester City	Bury	Preston N. E.	Stoke City	Manchester Utd.	Derby County	Blackpool	Wolverhampton W.					

BOLTON EVENING NEWS

are pleased to be
sponsoring
Bolton Wanderers
and wish them every success
in the coming season



GOING BY CAR?

HERE IS YOUR RAC ROUTE TO
OUR NEXT AWAY GAME AT

RAC

WREXHAM

BOLTON

A666/M61 to junction with M62
M62 (west) to intersection 10, junction with M6
5 miles
17 miles
23 miles
38 miles
47 miles
56 miles
A5117/A56 (follow 'Chester' signs) to Chester by-
pass junction with A483
A483 to Wrexham
Entering Wrexham on the A483, fork right on the
by-pass with the signs for A541 Mold/Llangollen.
Take the first exit from the by-pass with the A541
Mold signs turning left at the roundabout towards
Wrexham town centre. The football ground (The
Racecourse) is on your left.

TODAYS REFEREE

SAUNDERS, ALAN (Newcastle-upon-Tyne).
Commenced refereeing with local junior and senior
leagues, then progressed to the Northern League and the
Football League list. Refereed the Northern League Cup
final in 1976 and 1979, an England v. Scotland (Fire
Services) match in 1974. He was Senior Linesman at a
European Cup match in 1976, the Quarter Final of the
F.A. Cup in 1977 and also Scotland v. Finland in 1976.

A married man, with one
son, he is a Supervisor for
the housing department.
Likes swimming, playing
five-a-side football and enjoys
refereeing local Youth and Boys'
Club competitions.



LINESMEN:

P. Holland
(Chesterfield)

Red Flag

J. A. Lewis (Wrexham)
Yellow Flag

Team Check

Bolton Wanderers

- 1 Jim McDonagh
- 2 Steve Whitworth
- 3 Ian Bailey
- 4 Tony Henry
- 5 Paul Jones
- 6 Alan Gowling
- 7 Jeff Chandler
- 8 Wayne Foster
- 9 Mike Carter
- 10 Len Cantello
- 11 Dave Hoggan
- 12

Charlton Athletic

- 1 Nicky Johns
- 2 Terry Naylor
- 3 Phil Ferns
- 4 Kevin Smith
- 5 Lawrie Madden
- 6 Leighton Phillips
- 7 Paul Elliott
- 8 Paul Walsh
- 9 Derek Hales
- 10 Les Berry
- 11 Martin Robinson
- 12

HALF TIME SCOREBOARD

A	BIRMINGHAM CITY COVENTRY CITY		
B	BRIGHTON & HOVE A. LEEDS UNITED		
C	EVERTON ASTON VILLA		
D	MANCHESTER CITY SUNDERLAND		
E	MIDDLESBROUGH SWANSEA CITY		
F	SOUTHAMPTON ARSENAL		
G	STOKE CITY MANCHESTER UNITED		
H	TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR LIVERPOOL		
I	WEST BROMWICH A. NOTTS COUNTY		
J	WEST HAM UNITED WOLVERHAMPTON W.		
K	BARNLEY LUTON TOWN		
L	CAMBRIDGE UNITED QUEENS PARK RANGERS		
M	CARDIFF CITY GRIMSBY TOWN		
N	CHELSEA BLACKBURN ROVERS		
O	NEWCASTLE UNITED CRYSTAL PALACE		
P	NORWICH CITY SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY		
Q	OLDHAM ATHLETIC ORIENT		
R	SHREWSBURY TOWN LEICESTER CITY		
S	WATFORD DERBY COUNTY		
T	BURNLEY SOUTHEND UNITED		
U	PRESTON NORTH END FULHAM		
V	HARTLEPOOL UNITED BLACKPOOL		
W	WIGAN ATHLETIC ALDERSHOT		
X	YORK CITY BURY		

TODAY'S MATCH IS
SPONSORED BY
**INGERSOLL-RAND
CO. LTD.**



Today's Match Ball is
sponsored by
**RIGBY TAYLOR LTD.
VICTORIA WORKS
GARSIDE ST.
BOLTON**